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TO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4907  
INFO IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 9225

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069675

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/26/2028  
TAGS: [IZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST: TURKISH INTERFERENCE WITH IRAQI  
ELECTION LAW PROCESS UNHELPFUL

REF: A. BAGHDAD 1947  
[1](#)B. STATE 65812

Classified By: EUR Acting DAS Kathleen Fitzpatrick  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 2.

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SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVE  
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[1](#)2. (C) Despite the Secretary's stern warning to FM Babacan that Turkey's interference in the Iraqi election law deliberations is unhelpful and threatens to derail the entire process, the Turks continue to push, through the Turkmen, their proposal for a power-sharing agreement in Kirkuk. The Department requests that Embassy Ankara continue to engage the Turkish government at the highest available levels to urge them to cease their unhelpful interference in the Iraqi election law process. Turkey should instead use its influence with the Turkmen and others in Iraq to encourage swift passage of the pending election law and provincial elections by the end of this year. As noted in reftel A, provincial elections in Iraq are necessary to redress the imbalance in local government produced by the Sunni boycott in 2005, maintain momentum in building democratic processes, and offer a forum for alternate political voices.

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BACKGROUND  
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[1](#)3. (C/REL TO GOT) At the end of May, the Turkmen bloc in the Council of Representatives (CoR) introduced a Turkish proposal to share power on the Kirkuk provincial council by giving 32% of the seats to the Kurds, 32% to the Arabs, 32% to the Turkmen, and 4% to the remaining minorities. This proposal brought the issue of Kirkuk into the election law debate and is still being used to delay passage of the law.

[1](#)4. (C/REL TO GOT) During her June 5 meeting with FM Babacan, Secretary Rice warned that Turkey's proposal was unhelpful and threatened to derail the process (reftel B). She pressed Babacan to take his cues from the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) and Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) De Mistura. Despite Embassies Ankara and Baghdad reiterating U.S. objections and concerns that the proposal was disrupting consideration of the election law, the Turks continue to push the idea.

[1](#)5. (C/REL TO GOT) The GOI is technically capable of holding provincial elections by the end of the year; however, an election law for the provinces must be in place by the end of July in order to allow them enough time to register voters, print ballots, and take care of other logistics. This date is fast approaching, and once it has passed, UNAMI will be forced to announce that elections will not take place in 2008 due to the lack of an election law. Holding provincial

elections is the single most important political event slated for Iraq in 2008. These elections will help redress the imbalance of the Sunni boycott in 2005, maintain momentum in building democratic processes, and give a forum for alternate political voices.

¶6. (C/REL TO GOT) Iraqi political blocs are now unable to agree on how to handle elections in Kirkuk; this is blocking passage of the entire election law. The GOT is at least partially responsible for this development and needs to hear a strong message that their actions have been unhelpful and unwelcome. They must get the Turkmen to abandon their 32/32/32/4 proposal and instead use GOT influence with the Turkmen to help pass the elections law.

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REPORTING DEADLINE  
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¶7. (U) Embassy should report results of efforts by cable to NEA/I and EUR/SE before Tuesday, July 1.

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POINTS OF CONTACT  
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¶8. (U) Please contact Josh Davis in NEA/I or Paul Malik in EUR/SE with questions or requests for additional information.  
RICE